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Five die in Bayelsa ferry mishaps

From Willie Etim, Yenagoa

IT was a black weekend in Bayelsa as five persons, including two brothers, lost their lives in two separate boat mishaps along the waterways of Nembe in Nembe Local Council.

The incident occurred on Friday night while the victims were travelling to Nembe enroute Ogbia jetty for a burial ceremony involving the father of a friend of theirs.

One of the survivors, Stanley Terry, while narrating the sad incident, said he and his friends left the Ogbia jetty about 6:30 p.m. for Nembe in a 12-seater speed boat on arrival from Port- Harcourt, Rivers State capital, where they all reside.

Terry explained that they were a few minutes to their destination when an on-coming boat that nearly rammed into them ended up hitting the side of the passenger boat in which they were travelling.

Following the force of the crash, the boat began to sink, as water gradually crept in through its damaged parts, forcing all passengers on board and the driver to jump into the river.

"My brother, all of us jumped into the river and started swimming but after sometime, I heard one of the two brothers saying repeatedly to himself, I am tired", Terry said.

The two brothers, Christopher and Jonah Logan and the third victim identified as Mr. Loveday Fiberesima, who is the Community Liaison Officer (CLO) of Marcober Nigeria Limited, drowned before help could come their way.

Others managed to swim ashore while some co-travellers who saw the situation threw empty jerry-cans to assists those that were being trapped, resulting into less casualty figure.

The second ferry mishap occurred same day at about 9.00 p.m. around the Okodi axis of Ogbia Local Council involving a boat carrying diesel.

According to an eyewitness, the body of the victim of the second accident was recovered on Saturday while that of his brother and Mr. Fiberesima, were recovered yesterday morning.

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